(d) The other major simplifications, suggested by the Expert Group, in the existing procedure of environmental clearances, are given in the Statement. A High Power Committee (HPC) has been constituted under the chair of Secretary. Planning Commission to examine the recommendations of the Expert Group on statutory clearances.

***Statement***

*Simplifications suggested in the existing system of environment clearances by the Expert Group*

i. The State level Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) should be constituted expeditiously for the remaining States (19 out of 28 States and 4 out of 7 UTs have constituted the authorities so far) so that the appraisal process in respect of Category 'B' projects is de-centralized and completed at the States' level.

ii. Standardized Terms of Reference (ToRs) should be evolved for activities which are of repetitive nature.

iii. It should be endeavored to hold meetings of the sectoral Expert Appraisal Committees [EACs] (in MoEF) and State EACs (in SEIAAs) at regular intervals and at least once every month.

iv. Certain categories of projects - of simple and repetitive nature - should be exempted from public hearing.

v. The environment protection guidelines/processes for clearance should be re-drafted/re-engineered in line with the general recommendations of the report: application formats and proformas to be objective and clearly defined; data requirements to be clearly identified; public hearings to be conducted in a transparent manner, with well defined questionnaires for eliciting information from project affected persons (PAPs); the entire process of according clearances - by all major Central and State authorities - to be web enabled; timelines to be -defined in respect of all major clearances; and, a 'deemed' system of clearances to be put in place, where the application is taken as approved if no other intimation is provided till the date of expiry of the prescribed timeline.

**Research work in Deemed Universities**

*59. SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state;

(a) the basis of recognizing an institution as Deemed University;

(b) whether they are supposed to conduct research in sunrise areas;

(c) if so, the method of assessing the research work conducted in these universities in such sunrise disciplines;

(d) whether the University Grants Commission ascertains the academic and research infrastructure and financial position required to undertake such research, before granting them the Deemed University status;

(e) whether there is any provision of peer review of the academic performance of these institutions; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) The Central Government declares, under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act 1956, by notification in the Official Gazette, institutions which for historical reasons or for any other circumstances are not universities and yet are doing work of a high standard in specialized academic field comparable to a university and that granting of the status of a university would enable them to further contribute to the cause of higher education. The applicant institutions should generally be engaged in teaching programmes and research in chosen fields of specialization which are innovative and of very high academic standards at the Master's (or equivalent) and /or research levels. Institutions that are in the emerging areas with the promise of excellence could also be declared as 'deemed-to-be-universities' under the *de novo* category.

(c) to (f) According to the University Grants Commission, the performance of such institutions, including research work done by them, is assessed by the Commission, with the help of Expert Committees constituted by it. Members of the Expert Committees are chosen from relevant disciplines, and the Committees make 'on the spot assessments' of the applicant institutions and give their report on the basis of various parameters, including academic and research infrastructure and financial position of the institutions.

**Teaching of Urdu in Schools**

*60. DR. EJAZ ALI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether convents and private schools force Muslim students to study Sanskrit;

(b) the status of implementation of Urdu as optional subject therein; and

(c) the status of availability of Urdu books/ Urdu teachers in Government- run schools and details of selection procedure thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No such complaint has been received by either Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) or Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE) in respect of schools affiliated to them.

(b) Both CBSE and CISCE offer Urdu language as a subject at secondary and senior secondary levels.

(c) National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) has developed first language Urdu textbooks for classes I to XII based on National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005. In addition, NCERT has also published Urdu version of the text-books of other subjects for different